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 WASHINGTON TIMES  
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# Iran, Syria warned of U.S. retaliation

## Soviet navy ships steam into Tripoli

By Peter Almond  
 THE WASHINGTON TIMES

TRIPOLI, Libya — Soviet warships yesterday made their first port call here since the American raid on Libya, and a government official accused the United States and Israel of plotting to make terrorist strikes in Europe as a pretext for another attack on Libya.

The official Libyan news agency, JANA, did not give the number of ships of the Soviet Mediterranean fleet visiting Libyan ports, but said three cruisers were among them.

A Soviet vessel at anchor for the past two days in Tripoli harbor appeared to be a frigate equipped with radar communications and anti-aircraft batteries.

Mohammed Sharafeddin, the Libyan information minister, told reporters in Tripoli that his "information" about U.S. and Israeli terrorist plots against Europe came from intelligence sources in "friendly states, including European countries." He gave no identification of his sources.

He said the CIA and Mossad, the Israeli intelligence agency, were planning the attacks in such a way that they would be blamed on Col. Muammar Qaddafi. There was

speculation by Western intelligence sources that Libya was trying to disassociate itself from terrorist strikes by Palestinian or other terrorists already in place, beyond Libyan power to recall. By fixing blame now, the Libyan government could hope to avoid being held to account later.

[In Washington, White House spokesman Larry Speakes said, "The CIA is not causing terrorist incidents in Europe."

[Reagan administration officials said several Navy fighter and electronic surveillance planes have been flying off the coast of Libya since the American raid on Libya.

[The flights, conducted primarily by aircraft from the carrier America, mark an end to the practice followed earlier this year of notifying international aviation authorities in advance of flight operations off the Libyan coast, the sources said.]

In another development, JANA reported that Brig. Gen. Abu Bakr Yunis Jabir, the Libyan armed forces commander, met with leaders of radical PLO factions opposed to Palestine Liberation Organization chief Yasser Arafat.

Among them were Abu Mousa of the Fatah Provisional Command, Ahmed Jebril of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General

Command and Abu Firas, official spokesman of the PFLP-General Command, the agency said. It did not give details of the meeting.

Meanwhile speculation continued here on whether Col. Qaddafi's grip on the country has weakened.

Yesterday, he was interviewed by Soviet journalists in Tripoli and told them Libya refrained from retaliating against the U.S. 6th Fleet and NATO bases in southern Europe after last week's U.S. attack because it did not want to escalate the conflict.

Despite this appearance, observers and Western diplomats here dwelt on Col. Qaddafi's long absence from public view and wondered whether he now shares power as part of a five-man junta.

The observers also pointed to the strong press conference given last week by Col. Qaddafi's second-in-command, Staff Major Abdel-Salam Jalloud.

The Soviet role here is another source of speculation.

As a direct result of last week's U.S. raid, Moscow appears to have put pressure on Libya to de-emphasize the Qaddafi personality cult and concentrate on the country's deteriorating economic situation.

Whoever is running the show in Tripoli, it is clear that Libya, almost totally dependent on oil exports, is ignoring other Arab nations in the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) who want to

cut oil production to stabilize prices. Libya needs the foreign exchange to pay an estimated \$5 billion debt to the Soviet Union for its military ar-

senal, a debt the Soviets appear unwilling to forego.

Libya is also in arrears on its foreign debt, estimated at between \$3 billion and \$4 billion, owed to Italy, Turkey West Germany, South Korea and others.

Its oil revenues, meanwhile, have plummeted from about \$22 billion in 1980 to \$10 billion last year and are expected to drop further this year, possibly to \$5 billion.

As a result, Col. Qaddafi has had to trim back development programs, reduce arms purchases, expel foreign workers and order austerity measures.

There is strong speculation here that the Soviets, who pointedly offered Libya no practical help in defending the country from American attack, told Col. Qaddafi last week that whether or not he was exporting terrorism, he was endangering East-West relations and had to lower his profile.

Western diplomats note that there now seems to be an upgrading of the status of the five-man Revolutionary Committee, which Col. Qaddafi leads. The five are the survivors among 15 who led the 1969 bloodless coup that toppled King Idris I. The others have been killed or sent out of the country, or they escaped after a series of attempted coups over the years.

Besides Col. Qaddafi, committee members are Maj. Jalloud; Commandant Al Hamed Kweldi, foreign minister; Mustafa Karroubi, inspector general of the army; and Abu Bakr, army chief of staff.

All are military men, but they also form the core of the Revolutionary Guard, the "guardians of the revolution" of popular Islamic socialism, which takes its ideology from the writings of Col. Qaddafi's "Green Book."

Col. Qaddafi has always been wary of the military, the only power likely to overthrow him, and in 1980 introduced revolutionary committees into the military, arguing that this was the first step to abolishing the armed forces completely.

The Revolutionary Guard has been a major irritant to the military, keeping a close watch on senior officers and reportedly responsible to no one but the five-man committee.

What does appear to be certain is that, even if Libya has passed to collegial rule, the "junta" is strongly committed to the "Green Revolution" and still regards Col. Qaddafi as its leader.